Participant number 20 – Female, 18, Barking

Part 2

Interviewer: I’ll put that here again… and if you feel like you don’t want to talk about anything, just stop it at any time and like it won’t be any pressure. So um… can we start by talking about what you put first in the place where you feel most socially connected.

Interviewee: I put um… army cadets.

Interviewer: Where?

Interviewee: Army cadets. [Interviewer: okay] Yeah. Is that… like… alright?

Interviewer: Yeah, yeah. What is that?

Interviewee: Oh, so um [interviewer: I don’t know] er… it’s like… er where youths will go to um… like join, it’s like a youth club, but not, like it gives you… you learn real army situations, like you learn how to… you go to camps and stuff and learn how to lead and shoot a rifle and you learn discipline from army drill and like marching and taking control and… you learn like first aid and… you learn like a lot, like you do navigation and it’s just like… really active and… really good to learn something different, something new. So yeah. But then, going there, ‘cause I’ve put it… most socially, sociable… [interviewer: connected] yeah, connected… I put that because… you’re joining it, everyone has a purpose to join it. [Interviewer: mhm] Everyone’s going there… it’s not like school, like you’re not forced to go there. It’s your own decision to go there and be with each other and have… like connection with people that you wouldn’t know. [Interviewer: mm] But when I went to… I, I’m too old now to go, but when I was there… um, I met people that I wouldn’t meet, like I didn’t know them from Barking, Dagenham, like… um, so it was nice to see like other people that actually enjoyed going to cadets and enjoy this type of stuff. Like we all have an interest, [interviewer: mm], so it kind of helped… where everyone was connected. And I put there there’s um… a rank. And I was there for four years doing army cadets, and I didn’t get a rank and I was like, oh, I might as well just leave, like there’s no point, I’ve been here so long, there’s people that re getting it before me, and like I’ve done everything right, like I was a good cadet… and then, when I finally got my rank, like every… everyone, ‘cause we was at a camp, and then so you had like people from north London, like all over London… uh, in a square, all in our uniform, and they called out my name, and I was like so happy and like everyone was clapping and… like so proud of me, everyone was like yeah, heyza woo, like I finally got my rank and like, something I worked for… and so yeah, it was really happy and… like I um… but one thing I didn’t get in cadets was, how to shoot a rifle properly. So I was good at shooting… just wasn’t good at the weapon handling test and like things that you have to do to shoot safely. [Interviewer: mm] So um… so like I’d get angry with myself and disappointed and be like oh, I can’t do it, like, and then I’d… like everyone would get together and get in a circle and like help me out, until I passed the test. And so yeah, it was very like… very… everyone comes together, everyone supports each other. [Interviewer: mm] It was a very nice atmosphere to be in, definitely. And it was very different, like showed me… like there something else, like out there that you can do, not just sit at home and be bored and talk to one set of people and… like there’s a lot of opportunities that you could do. Where… where would I be able to shoot a rifle? Like it gave me something that I’m actually good at, like ‘cause I am good at shooting… and it showed me that. And um… like navigation as well, ‘cause I need that in what I’m doing now, like public services, so that helped me as well. It kind of showed me that… uniformed public services is what I want to go into. And this… is might not be the army, but it showed me that… there is physical things out there and not just office jobs and stuff like that. So yeah I’m really, really glad that I joined army cadets. ‘Cause obviously at first, you’re going into something completely new. I was really scared to go and I would only go if my friend went. But then she left, and I just kept going, I was like I might as well do something and complete it. And I kept going and it was good. And I kind of forgot that she was even there, because I stayed and I’d done it and I made friends and… yeah. It was definitely a place where you don’t feel alone.

Interviewer: So it sounds like you like a place where um…. you know, that you feel active [interviewee: mm] in a way.

Interviewee: Yeah. And like everyone has… a connection. Like you’re not getting forced to go. So everyone wants to go to this place. So um… so like… everyone has an interest in this, like even when, even if they wanna learn first aid or learn… how to shoot a rifle or learn navigation or other things, like army history, like… you’re not getting forced to go, they’re not ringing you up saying where… where are you? You can miss days if you want, but that’s your own… that’s your own thing and then… that’s your own problem. Like if you’re not gonna go then that’s… that’s you. But, it gives you a goal to work towards as well, because there’s loads of ranks, and I could have got higher, but it just weren’t, I dunno what happened, it just… they weren’t giving it to me. But I was happy with what I got because I tried so hard to get it. Like I’d been there for so long. And even though I didn’t have a rank, my unit was like, ‘cause I went into Barking army cadets and um… my unit would respect me, because where I’ve been there so long, even though I didn’t have a rank. So yeah, it was good to be there, and like everyone… even new kids, like no one’s forcing them to be there so they’d come back, even if they didn’t have friends, they would come back, so we obviously made them feel welcome and wanted and sometimes kids would come there, and they‘d have like problems at home and… to get away, to do something completely different, it is really, really good thing to have. [Interviewe: mm] Really good thing.

Interviewer: Yeah, so it sounds like… having a sense of purpose, people come there because there’s goals involved, [interviewee: mhm] um, there’s a sense of purpose in there and everyone comes because they want to come, [interviewee: yeah] it’s not like school, as you said, where you feel like you have to come.

Interviewee: Yeah, and like… sometimes, ‘cause army cadets is about discipline as well… so for people to want to be disciplined, which is good for like young people as well, ‘cause it shows then that you do have to follow certain rules like, you do have to follow them. And what taught me that was drill, like you have to do things in the right order and make sure that things are uniform and… um… that like, you’re all a team as well. Like if one person does it worng, you all… you’ve all done it wrong, [interviewer: mm] you have to start again. And that’s taught me a lot, and it’s helped me in what I want to do now, which is public services. So yeah, it has really… it is really good. Kind of miss it as well. Really miss it.

Interviewer: So it sounds like you like that sort of group [interviewee: mm] activity, like everyone supporting each other…

Interviewee: Yeah. Because… what’s the point of doing something if everyone’s not included. Like I do try my best, like in college we have these activities and like I try my best to get everyone involved but… you might have that certain person that is too shy or… or they don’t want to do it and you’re like either… help them out and build their confidence or… if they really don’t want to do it and they’re giving attitude then, kind of… you can’t help someone that don’t wanna be helped. So I do try my best, like leadership roles like… I’d get ev… everyone involved… try my best anyway. So in this, like, you’ve got people that are comfortable… so they obviously wanna come back. They obviously feel like everyone’s a team and they can make friends easy and… so that’s why I liked it. ‘Cause even though my friend left, like a week after I made new friends. And obviously ‘cause they’re… we have the same interests, we’re all gonna get along, which we did. And there was no arguments in my unit… dunno about others, but in my unit we was, we was alright. And then when it come to camps, like we wouldn’t see… it was like annual camps… so we wouldn’t see each other for like a year, and then coming back together the next year, it would be like you never left and everyone’s friends and we’re all doing the same activities like… there’s one where we had to go up high and I’m a little bit scared of heights and I wanna be a fire fighter but I’m a little bit scared of heights… I think I’m scared of falling, instead of heights, but um… and I didn’t really wanna do it, and everyone’s like cheering me on, and then there’s other things that… people scared of water, and I was cheering them on, and they actually did it and they overcome things and good, really good atmosphere to have to not see these people in so long and then just get back and like sleep in the same beds, sleep in the same rooms, and… not the same beds but the same rooms, um… and like having that discipline and knowing that, if we don’t do these things like we will get in trouble and we need to do it as a team, so like we had to make our beds up properly every morning, have the rooms cleaned every morning, and… that’s what I mean, certain things, it was like the army. Like there was certain things that we had to learn… um, so yeah and having that, so this one girl didn’t make her bed properly, and we all had to like go outside and run and do um… star jumps and every other thing. So it was like, having that element of team work drilled into my head, it was a really good thing to have. [Interviewer: mm] Yeah.

Interviewer: How did that make you feel?

Interviewee: Um… made me feel like I had a purpose and like… having to do things right so other people don’t have to suffer, and myself don’t have to suffer… so yeah it made me feel like, need it get that done, like now, do it now. Um… but yeah. Having a like, knowing that you’ve got things planned out for the day felt good, yeah.

Interviewer: And how did that make you feel, being in that environment with a lot of team work and support. [Interviewee: yeah] How did you feel?

Interviewee: Good. Really good. Like happy. ‘Cause like I said earlier, in school everyone’s like oh, you’re on your own, or… bullying or calling you names, where in cadets you didn’t have any of that. One because they didn’t tolerate it, and if you did, you was kicked out straight away. Um… but yeah. Didn’t have that because everyone’s there for a reason, like they wanna be there. So they didn’t put theirself in a situation where they’d get kicked out. Where in school if you get… like you don’t wanna be there anyway so if you get kicked out you’re happy about it and you like, you go to another school. But yeah. So… having that element of teamwork is really good to have. And that made everyone feel happy and uplifted and everything.

Interviewer: Mm. Thank you.

Interviewee: It’s okay.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you wanted to say about that box?

Interviewee: No, not really.

Interviewer: Can we talk about what you put next please?

Interviewee: Erm… I put home. For least… like…

Interviewer: For where you feel most lonely [Interviewee: yeah] … least connected…

Interviewee: Yeah, so I put home for most lonely because, like I said before, my home, my house is like a hotel kind of. So like you’ve got my mum and dad downstairs and you’ve got me and my sister… no, you’ve got my mum and dad upstairs, watching telly, and you’ve got me and my sister downstairs, on our phones, watching telly… like there’s no communication, it’s just so boring where… you feel so like alone. Even though you’ve got a house full of three people, everyone’s just glued to a telly or… they’re sleeping or something, like they wanna be on their own. But I’m more… from cadets like I’m more family and team work and everyone be together. And that’s why I find it so good to be at my boyfriend’s house, [interviewer: mm] because everyone’s together, everyone’s downstairs… I think he’s the only one that don’t go downstairs because he’s upstairs playing Xbox. But that’s… a boy for you. But then I feel so welcome at his house because everyone’s downstairs, like I can sit downstairs and talk to people and ask them how their day was and… just like home’s not like that, it just isn’t. Because they have nothing to talk about. They… their routine day is just the same, nothing… like they have nothing to talk about. So it is really boring and lonely there. Like I’m just on my phone scrolling through things that I don’t care about. I’d rather sit there with my family and talk about things. Or watch a film together or… have dinner together. Rather than, rather it be like a hotel where you only meet up in the kitchen. Like it’s not… it’s not right. It is really boring and lonely. So I’d rather separate myself from that and go to a place where I do feel… I do feel wanted there, like I know I’m wanted by my mum and dad, but… they don’t show it type thing. So… [interviewer: mm], yeah so I separate myself to… from that and go to a place… where I do feel… like talk to people.

Interviewer: And um, thank you… and how does that make you feel, being at home and everyone’s kind of doing their own thing or not sort of being in that team [interviewee: mm] style that you like?

Interviewee: It’s just upsetting. It really is, ‘cause how can you live like that? Like it’s just boring, do the same thing every day… personally I’d wanna go out. Even if we don’t have money, like, take the dog for a walk. Like do something together. It don’t have to be something special, like, I feel like when I go home, I’m like oh, yous are boring, like this is boring. I’m talking about go out… going out somewhere like to the pub or something or somewhere expensive, I’m just talking about… take the dog for a walk, sit downstairs with each other like… talk to each other. Not separate. Like it don’t make sense to me.

Interviewer: And when you said like, when you home, you spend time like just on your phone, doing things that you don’t care about. [Interviewee: mhm] Can you tell me more about that?

Interviewee: So like just… seeing how other people live, like on Instagram or Facebook and I’m just… scrolling, and I don’t really… care about things like that. Like, I’d rather… sit there and talk to people. ‘Cause I’m not really… I’m not really active on my phone. Like I’ll sit there and scroll through it but I’m not like oh I’ll take pictures, post it, or… type in a way to everyone or… making statuses and stuff like that on Facebook. I’m not really about that, so I’d sit there and get bored of scrolling, seeing the same rubbish over and over again. The only reason I go on my phone is to talk to my friends. Um… but yeah. So I’m sitting there. But my sister’s very like that. Like she cares what celebrities are doing and she cares about… because I guess it’s an escape for her. Because she’s not sitting there doing nothing. But I’d rather not be on my phone, and do something else. So yeah. It’s… it is hard. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause I don’t wanna be consumed by phone as well. Like, it’s not… I think, because I can’t read properly as well, like, I think it’s boring, just sitting there, looking at words, trying to read it and then I just get bored. So I just keep scrolling… so yeah, it does feel… does feel like boring. It’s very boring man.

Interviewer: Um… but what… what about Instagram, can you tell me about that?

Interviewee: Um… just… when I go on it I’m just scrolling, not really doing nothing on it. Like I post a picture if I really like it, but other than that… yeah.

Interviewer: Thank you. Is there anything else you wanted to say about that box?

Interviewee: Um… no.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you. Now I’ll come to the final bit of the study, [interviewer: yeah] the questionnaire. Um, I don’t know if you’re in a rush or… I’ll just pause that, sorry.